



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

SFUND RECORDS CTR
2158483

April 21, 2008

INFORMATION REQUEST
URGENT LEGAL MATTER
PROMPT REPLY NECESSARY

El Paso Corporation
 Douglas L. Foshee, President and CEO
 1001 Louisiana Street
 Houston, TX 77002

Re: Request for Information – Navajo Nation Abandoned Uranium Mine Sites

Dear Mr. Foshee:

This letter seeks your cooperation in providing information and documents relating to historical operations of uranium mining and milling in the Navajo Nation. This request is for information you, your predecessor corporation(s) and/or affiliated corporation(s) may have pertaining to the abandoned uranium mine sites located within and around the Navajo Nation.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") is spending public funds to oversee the investigation of actual and threatened releases of hazardous substances within the Navajo Nation. EPA is involved in this investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination, to assess the effects of contamination on the environment and human health and to identify activities and parties that contributed to the contamination.

Under Section 104(e) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9604(e), as amended, EPA has broad information gathering authority. Please note that your compliance with this information request is mandatory. Please be further advised that provision of false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations may subject you to criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. § 1001. The information you provide may be used by EPA in administrative, civil or criminal proceedings.

This request for information is not subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act because it is not an "information collection request" within the meaning of 44 U.S.C. § 3502(3), 3507, 3512, and 3518(c)(1). See also 5 C.F.R. § 1320.3, 1320.4, and 1320.6.

You may consider some of the information EPA is requesting to be confidential. Please be aware that you may not withhold the information on that basis. If you wish EPA to treat the information confidentially, you must advise EPA of that fact by following the procedures outlined in Enclosure A, including providing support for your claim of confidentiality.

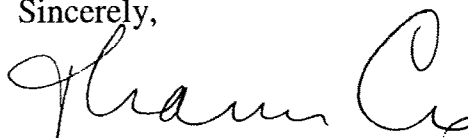
If you have information about other parties who may have information that may assist in this investigation of abandoned uranium mine sites within the Navajo Nation or parties that may be responsible for contamination at those sites, that information should be submitted within the time frame noted below.

Please return your written response to this request for information, signed by you or a duly authorized official of your company, within **30** calendar days of receipt of this letter. Your response should be directed to me at the following address:

Thanne Cox, SFD-7-5
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

We appreciate and look forward to your response to this information request. If you have any questions regarding this information request, please contact me at (415) 972-3908 or by e-mail at cox.elizabeth@epa.gov. If you have questions about EPA's involvement in this investigation, the nature of the environmental conditions within the Navajo Nation, or the status of assessment and cleanup activities, please contact Andrew Bain, Remedial Project Manager at (415) 972-3167. Please direct any legal questions to Harrison Karr, Assistant Regional Counsel at (415) 972-3939.

Sincerely,



Thanne Cox, Chief
Case Development Cost Recovery Section
Superfund Division

Enclosures (2)

Cc: Andrew Bain, SFD-8-2
Harrison Karr, ORC-3

ENCLOSURE A: INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Instructions

1. A separate response must be made to each of the questions set forth in this information request.
2. Please provide the answers to the questions on a separate piece or pieces of paper. Please indicate at the beginning of each answer the number of the question to which the answer corresponds. Please type or print clearly.
3. For each question, please identify all documents consulted in the preparation of the answer.
4. If your response to any question includes information relating to more than one property (as that term is defined below), identify each such property and segregate your response accordingly.
5. If for any reason you are withholding any documents that are responsive to this information request, identify the document(s) and state your basis for withholding the document(s).
6. For each question contained in this letter, if information responsive to this information request is not in your possession, custody or control, please identify the person(s) from whom such information may be obtained.
7. If additional information or documents responsive to this information request become known or available to you after you respond, EPA hereby requests pursuant to CERCLA Section 104(e) that you supplement your response to EPA.

Definitions

The following definitions shall apply in this information request.

1. The term “you” shall mean and include El Paso Corporation and its predecessors, successors, assigns, and affiliates, and the officers, managers, employees, contractors, trustees, and agents of any of them.
2. The term “property” shall include all of the following:
 - a. All areas in which you conducted uranium mining, investigation, surveying, or any other activity related to locating, extracting, transporting or processing uranium ore, from which hazardous substances may have come to be located within the Navajo Nation.
 - b. All areas within the Navajo Nation in which hazardous substances may have

come to be located as a result of uranium mining, investigation, surveying, or any other activity related to locating, extracting, transporting or processing uranium ore by you.

3. The term “Navajo Nation” shall mean and include all of the following:

- a. Trust lands held for the benefit of the Navajo Nation, whether located within or outside of the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.
- b. Fee lands located within the exterior boundaries of the Navajo Nation, whether held by the Navajo Nation, a member of the Navajo Nation or any non-member.
- c. Allotted lands held for the benefit of a member of the Navajo Nation, whether located within or outside of the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

- 4. The term “hazardous substance” shall have the same definition as that contained in Section 101(14) of CERCLA and includes any mixtures of such hazardous substances with any other substances, including mixtures of hazardous substances with petroleum products or other non-hazardous substances. Additionally, for purposes of this letter, “hazardous substance” shall include pollutants and contaminants as defined in CERCLA.
- 5. With respect to an individual, the term “identify” means to provide a name, present or last known business address and business telephone number and affiliation, if any, with your company. If you do not know the individual’s business address and business telephone number, provide the person’s home address and home telephone number.
- 6. The term “document” includes any written, recorded, computer-generated or visually reproduced material of any kind in any medium in your possession, custody or control or known by you to exist, including originals, all drafts and all non-identical copies.
- 7. Disclosure of confidential information. EPA is requesting this information pursuant to CERCLA § 104(e). EPA has the authority to use the information requested in this letter in administrative, civil or criminal actions. You may assert a business confidentiality claim covering all or part of the information requested in this letter, as provided in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) § 2.203(b).

If you make a claim of confidentiality for any of the information you submit to EPA, you must substantiate that claim. For each document, your substantiation must separately address the following points enumerated in 40 C.F.R. § 2.204(e):

- a. The portions of the information alleged to be entitled to confidential treatment;
- b. The period of time for which confidential treatment is desired (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specific event or permanently);
- c. Measures taken by you to guard against the undesired disclosure of the information to others;

- d. The extent to which the information has been disclosed to others and the precautions taken in connection therewith;
- e. Pertinent confidentiality determinations, if any, by EPA or other federal agencies and a copy of any such determinations or reference to them; and
- f. Whether you assert that disclosure of the information would be likely to result in substantial harmful effects on your business' competitive position, and, if so, what those harmful effects would be, why they should be viewed as substantial and an explanation of the causal relationship between disclosure and such harmful effects.

To make a confidentiality claim, please stamp or type "confidential" on each page of any confidential responses and any related confidential documents. Confidential portions of otherwise non-confidential documents should be clearly identified. Where applicable, you should also indicate a date, if any, after which the information need no longer be treated as confidential. You must also include the information necessary to substantiate your claim (as described above). Please enclose all material identified as confidential in a separate envelope. For all information not clearly marked as confidential, EPA will consider any confidentiality claim to be waived, and this information may be made publicly available without further notice.

All confidentiality claims are subject to EPA verification and must be made in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 2.08, which provides in part that you satisfactorily show that you have taken reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the information and that you intend to continue to do so, and that it is not and has not been obtainable by legitimate means without your consent.

Information which you submit in response to this Information Request may be disclosed by EPA to authorized representatives of the United States, pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 2.310(h), even if you assert that all or part of it is confidential business information. The authorized representatives of EPA to which EPA may disclose information contained in your response are as follows:

- (i) GRB Environmental Services, Inc.
EPA Contract Number EP-R9-06-09
- (ii) Science Applications International Corporation
GSA Contract Number GS-10F-0076J, Delivery Order 0906

Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 2.310(h)(2)(iii), EPA will provide notice in the Federal Register or by letter of any subsequent additions in EPA contractors who may have access to your response to this Information Request. You will have at least five working days to submit comments to any such notice.

This information may be made available to these authorized representatives of EPA to assist with document handling, inventory and indexing. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 2.310(h), you may submit comments on EPA's disclosure of any confidential information contained in your response by EPA to its authorized representatives along with the response itself, within the thirty (30) calendar day period in which the response is due to:

Thanne Cox, SFD-7-5
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

ENCLOSURE B: QUESTIONS

1. Please identify those individuals who assisted in the preparation of this information response. For each individual, provide the following: name, current or last known address and telephone number, dates of employment, and current and former job titles.
2. Identify all properties owned, leased, possessed or held by you to conduct operations for the production of uranium in the Navajo Nation. Provide a copy of the lease, permit, claim(s), deed, license or any other document evidencing your status as an owner, tenant or possessor of the property and all attachments.
3. Provide information about each property identified by you, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Property boundaries, including a written legal description;
 - b. A map identifying the property location within or in relation to the Navajo Nation;
 - c. Location and description of surface structures (e.g., protore, waste pile, retention ponds, buildings, housing, etc.);
 - d. Location and description of any ground water wells or sources of surface water used in mine operations;
 - e. All maps, drawings, aerial photographs of the property.
4. For each property identified by you, describe the activities or operations which were conducted by you on that property. Provide any and all documentation in your possession which describes the operations which occurred at that property.
5. For any property identified by you, describe what waste by-product(s) was produced during your operations.
6. For each waste by-product identified by you, describe what you did with these waste by-products.
 - a. Specifically, also describe what you did with:
 - i) uranium protore or uneconomic material
 - ii) any listed or unlisted hazardous substances
 - iii) dewatering or surface water discharge
 - b. Provide all documentation which describes how waste by-product was stored, treated, disposed or deposited at the property.
 - c. For each waste by-product identified, provide a map identifying where on the property these wastes were stored, treated, disposed or deposited.
7. For each property, identify and describe all reclamation or cleanup efforts made by you to address waste by-products and/or to prevent potential releases of hazardous substances.
8. Specifically, identify and describe any and all operations you conducted at the mine sites listed below. For each of these mines, answer questions 2 – 7 above as it applies to the site.

Mine	Aliases
NE Church Rock	
Billy the Kid	Section 19; Maddox and Teague; Prewitt, Greer, Warren and McCormack, Red Top No 1, 3-7; Prewitt
Kermac Mine No. 22	Section 22;
A&B No.3	
Mariano Lake	Gulf; Section 12
NE Church Rock No.1	Section 35 Mine; Kerr McGee Quivira
Church Rock	
Charles Keith	Olijeto Mesa West; Keith Mine-A; Olijeto
C D and S	Section 35
Rock Door No.1	Rock Door Mine
Black Jack No.1	
Haystack	DOE lease NM-1-B; MLB-NM-B-1; Section 13 NM-B-1 lease, Railroad section, Arthur Bibo; Section 13 Pit
Glover	
Monument No. 2	Chee Nez No.1; VCA Mining Unit No. 66;
Mac No. 1	
NE Church Rock No1-East	Churchrock 1 East; Kerr McGee Section 36 Mine
Section 18 and Section 18 SEQ	Brown Vanderer; Williams; Williams and Thompson
Haystack No.1	Haystack; Haystack-Section 19 Open Pit Complex
Moonlight Mine	
Mesa I, Mine No. 10-15	Mesa I Mine 10-15, Mesa 1 Mine #10-15

9. For each of the mine sites identified in the table above, identify any other person(s) or entity(ies) which operated at the mine. Provide the dates of their operations and describe their operations.

10. If you have any reason to believe that there may be persons able to provide a more detailed or complete response to any part of this information request or who may be able to provide additional responsive documents, please identify such persons, including their last known addresses and telephone number.